L Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI I Kuwait
Bedouins M36

Light-hearted Chaff

522 755 Once when my wife, Zahra and I visited Junaifir's tent, I asked to see 'Abdullah's wife, who had cooked our lunch so nicely. We were all taken to the women's portion of 'Abdullah's tent and met Shagha, a pretty comely girl who had had four children, all of whom had died, in spite of her having according to 'Ajman custom eaten a portion of the ear of the last arrival to keep it alive. I knew from others that Shagha was afraid that 'Abdullah intended taking another girl to wife, so I determined to help her.

522 *Abdullah:* When, O Abu Sa'ud, are you going to give me the rifle you promised me last year?

Self: When I hear from the lips of your wife that you deserve one.

'Abdullah to Shagha: Speak up, woman, and say that I am the best of husbands, and should have the rifle.

Shagha: He is a good man, O Abu Sa'ud, please give him his wish.

Self: I will certainly, and for your eye's sake, but a bird told me he desires the daughter of Murait (a local beauty), and neither God nor Um Sa'ud (my wife) here would agree to this so long as you are living. (A general titter from the women and roars of laughter from Junaifir, father of 'Abdullah.)

Junaifir: By God, O Abu Sa'ud, you speak the truth, though whence you have heard the rumour God alone knows. She shall not be ill-treated, and you may make a condition of giving 'Abdullah the rifle, that he does not divorce our Shagha.

Self: So, 'Abdullah, I have found you out. The rifle shall be yours as soon as you bring me a paper *warqa* sealed by your seal, saying that you will not marry bint Murait or put away Shagha. (Much laughter and joy on Shagha's part.)

'Abdullah: Very well, Abu Sa'ud, a rifle is worth more than all women put together. The *warqa* shall be brought you. But don't forget also some cartridges.

NOTE.—The rascally 'Abdullah proceeded to Riyadh in June 1936 and married a young thing there. Shagha has been told she will still be considered *Raisat al Bait*, or head of the tent. Fortunately 'Abdullah has not yet got his rifle: I don't think he will now.

After this amusing passage Junaifir ups and says, "Ya Abu Sa'ud, I have found you the 'Ajman girl, whom we are going to marry you to". "Where?" says I. "Ho, you *niswan* (Oh, you wenches) bring along my sister the beloved Samha and show her to the Gonsul" (Consul). The proffered bride was duly brought along, an old crony of some